



FACEBOOK LIVE SEMINAR

Tomato Wars: Which Variety Will Reign Supreme?

THE BATTLE FOR THE BEST

Welcome to our tour of the most delicious tomato varieties, from juicy beefsteaks to tangy heirlooms and everything in between. We will be conducting a taste test of the top tomato varieties, pitting them against each other to determine which ones will reign supreme for this year's growing season.

TOMATO BASICS

Tomatoes are a popular vegetable to grow in gardens, or containers, here in Hampton Roads. Follow these basic steps to help you grow and care for your tomatoes:

- Choose a sunny spot: Tomatoes need at least 6-8 hours of direct sunlight per day to grow properly.
- Choose the right soil: Tomatoes grow best in well-draining, fertile soil. Consider adding compost, or other organic matter, to your soil before planting, especially when amending ground soil..
- Plant the tomatoes: Plant your tomato seedlings deep in the soil, up to the first set of leaves. This helps encourage strong root growth.
- Water regularly: Tomatoes need regular watering, especially during hot, dry weather. Water deeply and regularly, but avoid getting the leaves wet.

- Provide support: Tomatoes need support as they grow, such as a trellises, stakes or cages. This helps keep the plant upright and makes it easier to pick the fruit.
- Plant Food: Tomatoes need regular fertilizing to help them grow and produce fruit. Use a balanced plant food every other watering (or as directed) during the growing season.
- Control pests and diseases: Watch for pests and diseases that can damage your tomatoes, such as aphids, blight or blossom end rot. Take action to prevent, or treat, these issues as soon as possible. Ask our Garden Pharmacy experts on the best way to give your tomatoes preventative care.
- Harvest the tomatoes: When the tomatoes are ripe, gently pick them from the vine. Tomatoes taste best when fully ripe, but can also be picked early and allowed to ripen indoors.

TOMATO WARS

It's time to find our top tomato from this year's line-up! We have some great contenders from our #1 seed, "Better Boy" to underdogs like "Mortgage Lifter" and "Beefmaster". Let the games begin!

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BETTER BOY

This variety of tomato is a hybrid that combines the best traits of both heirloom and modern tomatoes, resulting in a juicy, meaty fruit with a classic tomato taste. It is a determinate tomato plant, which means it grows to a certain height and then stops, making it easier to manage in the garden. Better Boy is also resistant to many common tomato diseases and pests, making it a reliable and low-maintenance choice. It is a versatile tomato that can be used in a wide range of dishes, from salads to sauces, and it is known for its excellent texture and flavor.

ROMA

Roma tomatoes, also known as Italian tomatoes, are a popular variety of tomato that is well-known for its meaty, dense flesh and low moisture content. This makes it a great choice for making sauces, pastes, and canning. Roma tomatoes have an oval or plum shape, with a bright red color and a slightly sweet and tangy taste. They are often used in Italian cuisine for their rich flavor and versatility in cooking.

BEEFMASTER

Beefmaster tomatoes are a large, meaty variety of tomato that are known for their exceptional size and flavor. These tomatoes can grow up to one pound each, and have a juicy, dense flesh that is perfect for slicing and using in sandwiches or salads. Beefmaster tomatoes have a sweet, tangy taste that is often described as "old-fashioned" or "heirloom" in flavor. They are an indeterminate tomato plant, which means they will continue to grow and produce fruit throughout the growing season. They are a popular choice for those who want to grow large, flavorful tomatoes that are both delicious and visually impressive.

EARLY GIRL

Early Girl tomatoes are a popular variety of tomato that are known for their early ripening and reliable production. These tomatoes typically ripen in about 50-60 days from transplanting, making them one of the earliest tomato varieties to produce fruit. Early Girl tomatoes have a classic tomato flavor that is slightly sweet and tangy, and they are a versatile tomato that can be used in a wide range of dishes, from salads to sauces. Early Girl tomatoes are a great choice for home gardeners who want to enjoy fresh tomatoes as early as possible, and they are also a popular choice for commercial growers who want to have an early crop to market. They are a reliable and easy-to-grow tomato variety that is resistant to many common tomato diseases, making them a popular choice for gardeners of all levels of experience.

CHEROKEE PURPLE

Cherokee Purple tomatoes are a unique and popular variety of tomato that are known for their dark, purplish-brown color and rich, complex flavor. These tomatoes are an heirloom variety that has been grown for over 100 years, and they are a favorite among home gardeners and chefs alike. Cherokee Purple tomatoes have a juicy, meaty flesh that is perfect for slicing and using in sandwiches or salads, and they have a rich, smoky flavor that is often described as "winey" or "earthy."

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Cherokee Purple tomatoes are also known for their disease resistance and high yields, making them a reliable and easy-to-grow variety for home gardeners.

MORTGAGE LIFTER

Mortgage Lifter tomatoes are a popular variety of tomato that is known for its large size and sweet, meaty flavor. The Mortgage Lifter tomato was developed by a man named Radiator Charlie in the 1930s, who crossbred several varieties of tomato plants to create a plant that produced exceptionally large and tasty fruit. These tomatoes can grow up to two pounds each and have a dense flesh that is perfect for slicing and using in sandwiches or salads. They are a popular choice for those who want to grow large, flavorful tomatoes that have a unique history and story behind them.

SUNGOLD

Sungold tomatoes are a popular variety of cherry tomato that is known for its sweet, fruity flavor and bright, orange-yellow color. These tomatoes are a hybrid variety that was developed by Japanese breeders in the 1990s and have become a favorite for all kinds of gardeners. Sungold tomatoes are small, about the size of a grape or cherry, and have a juicy, meaty flesh for using in salads. Perfect for those who want to enjoy a delicious, sweet tomato that is perfect for snacking.

SUPER SWEET 100

Super Sweet 100 tomatoes are a popular variety of cherry tomato that is known for its exceptional sweetness and high yield. These tomatoes produce clusters of small, round fruit that are about the size of a grape, and they have a juicy, meaty flesh that is bursting with flavor. Super Sweet 100 tomatoes are a popular choice for those who want to enjoy a sweet and delicious tomato for adding to salads, or using in a variety of recipes.

SO...WHO'S THE WINNER?

The Sungold cherry tomato is the Garden Guru's choice for the win this season! Beyond its disease resistance and indeterminate qualities, Sungold tomatoes mature quickly, create lots of fruit, and are just the ideal snacking tomato. Bursting with a tangy, sweet, almost tropical flavor, Sungold tomatoes take the win!

Find Sungold tomatoes at our year-round locations in Virginia Beach and our seasonal Garden Markets located all across Hampton Roads during the spring season!

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